1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
FF38 Katab FF38



583 father of the girl then fixes a day for the capture of the bride by the bridegroom. She is sent off on some fictitious errand, is captured by the bridegroom's friend, lifted on their shoulders, and carried to his house. One of my servants witnessed a capture. The maid was sitting in the market at Zangon Katab, selling beans (by her mother's orders). Three young men suddenly appeared, and the strongest caught her by the legs and carried her off screaming, with her legs over his shoulders and her head pointing downwards. She struggled violently and bit him, and after having covered 300 yards he was glad to hand her over to his assistants. No doubt they all arrived at the husband's home very much the worse for wear. Parents state that the capture ceremony saves them the pain of parting with their daughter, but it is apparent that until comparatively recent times the capture of a bride was a real and not a mock affair. For the Katab were accustomed to capture, when they could, virgins and married women from other tribes; and it was permissible within the tribe for one clansman to capture a girl who was betrothed to a fellow clansman. If the captor belonged to the same subdivision as the fiancé he repaid the fiancé all his expenses, as custom compelled the fiancé to resign his claim for ever. But if the captor belonged to a different subdivision there would be no repayment, as the fiancé was permitted to elope later with the woman to whom he had formerly been [178] betrothed. The capture of affianced girls has now been abandoned, the tribe having come to regard it as inconsistent with modern conditions. Moreover, with the increase of the bride-price, a captor would find it difficult to repay a sub-clansman whose fiancée he had captured. The captured bride is deposited in the hut of one of the bridegroom's relatives, and ● 585 remains there for three nights. On the fourth night she is taken to the bridegroom's house and the marriage is consummated. If the bridegroom discovers that the bride is not *virgo intacta* he abuses her roundly, but he does not, like the Hausa, advertise 582 the fact to the world. The Katab has good reason to expect 836 virginity, for though premarital cohabitation is practised between a girl and her fiancé and other lads, with the connivance of her parents, many Katab girls find themselves married women before they have reached the age of puberty. It is revolting to our ideas, and also appears to be against the law of nature, that

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836 grown-up men should have sexual relations with legal wives who may be under 13 years of age.

836 Pre-marital cohabitation is not practised to any great extent; for it is taboo between fellow clansmen; and as most of the clans are localized a boy of one clan has little opportunity of 848 sleeping with a girl of another. In the quite exceptional case [847] of a girl conceiving by a youth who was not her betrothed, it was stated that resort might be had to abortifacients. If these were unsuccessful, the girl would be married off as quickly as possible to her fiancé, who would accept the child as his own. The child would suffer no legal disabilities, and in fact would occupy the privileged position of an "eldest son". *Per contra* this custom may explain why it is that, among the Hausa, the eldest son is treated as a stranger.

585 Katab girls are only married between October and March, i.e. during the dry season, and not (as among the Kagoro) during 591 a particular month of the wet season. The bride spends her first year in the hut of her husband's mother, sleeping with her husband at night. At the end of the year she is given her own hut and is provided by the husband's mother with the necessary 853 cooking utensils. After the birth of a child no sexual relations may occur between husband and wife until the child is weaned, 834 the reason for this rule being based on the observation that conception interferes with lactation.

564 It remains to add that members of the same sub-clan frequently assist each other in procuring wives. It is not 613 uncommon for a man to hand over to a friend the bride-price 431 obtained for his daughter or niece in order that the friend may have the means to provide himself with a wife. The money may be treated as a loan, but is often given as a free gift.

586 It has been indicated already that no Katab husband can be sure that his wife of to-day will be living with him one year 851 hence. She may be approached by a clansman of her husband (but belonging to another subdivision) and invited to share his life. If she prefers to remain with her husband she will say "No"; but if she wishes a change she will say "Yes", and refer him to her parents, to whom he will have to pay a bride-price. He may approach the parents in the first instance, and they may bring pressure to bear on their daughter. And so off she goes, perhaps enceinte by her first husband. It does not

3: Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoma



It has been suggested that they formed part of a large group which migrated from the north-west of Zaria, which includes the Kagoro, Attakka, Jaba, Kaje, Kaura and Moroa, to whom they show a certain affinity in language, customs and dress. 101

They speak a dialect of their own, and the majority know Haussa also. 197 191

Their Chief, "Dem," pointed out to Osuman, first Emir of Jemaa, the desirability of the site, and voluntarily paid tribute to Zaria through Jemaa. Circ. 1859 A.D. they ceased to pay, and a large proportion of the population were burnt out in caves in the resulting punitive expedition. Small raids continued until 1894, when they were finally subdued by the Filane and acknowledged the suzerainty of the Emir of Jemaa, to whom the Kagoma District head is now responsible. 648 175

The two acknowledged crimes were murder and theft. A murderer was required to give a bull to the bereaved family, whilst a thief was detained until his relatives paid a horse to the Sarkin Jemaa and two goats to his captors. 682 685

They are excellent agriculturists. Boys are given miniature hoes at the age of three years old. 241 524

They are of good physique. 192

The men wear a triangular-shaped leather loin-covering, or a skin that hangs from the shoulder, and bind their beards with grass. They carry wooden swords. 291

Virgins wear an apron of green strings ornamented with cowries and brass bells. Married women wear a loin-cloth. 291 301

Nearly all the villages are situated on the top of the hills, amongst almost inaccessible rocks. The huts are of mud, surmounted by conical-shaped grass roofs. The interior is divided into three partitions by means of mud-arches projecting from the wall.* 361 342

A girl may be betrothed before her birth, the *fiancé* undertaking that should the unborn babe prove to be a boy he will be its friend all through life. Such an arrangement is, however, of rare occurrence, the custom being for a girl to be engaged to the first man who gives her parents a fowl and bespeaks her after her birth. The sujtor further gives her father a hoe or 2,000 cowries every year, until the girl has arrived at marriageable age at about ten years; as the marriage day approaches he gives the bride's father a further present of five chickens. On the day itself, six of his boy friends enter her parents' house, where she is hidden amongst the women, find and capture her, and take her to one of the groom's female relations. They return at night, give the custodian a chicken and take the bride to the groom's house, where he is awaiting her with three male friends who proceed to address the young pair on the duties 584 585

* *Vide* Jaba, p. 163.

3:Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoma



585 of marriage before leaving them alone together. The following morning the groom's mother gives a feast to the inmates of her own house, and a month later the bride's mother sends two calabashes of tuo to her son-in-law's house, whence he distributes them to his friends and to the elders of the village as proof that the marriage has taken place.

587 When a man marries a second time the above formula is omitted. He gives the girl's parents a hoe and 4,000 cowries, after which the girl goes to him of her own accord, but if she delays doing so for more than a year after the dower is paid he can claim it back.

586 Desertion is considered no crime, and if a woman leaves her husband soon after the marriage, the dower is refunded to him by his wife's parents, but if she has remained with him for four or five years he has no claim. Her new husband pays her parents a hoe and 4,000 cowries.

575 173 The difficulties that have arisen from this laxity of morals are met by the following device:

"As far as this district is concerned the idea of forming a 'Dodo' society originally started in the village of Agabi, a number of years ago. Two men were bewailing the fact that their wives were constantly running away from them and that their children were getting out of hand. They put their heads together to seek a remedy.

"Eventually they took a gourd from the 'Kukan Chikki' tree, and after scraping it hollow, placed some kind of parchment over its mouth. In the middle of the night this was blown with terrifying effect (the noise is very like that produced by a comb and piece of paper). The women were very frightened and hid [176] themselves. They were subsequently told this was the voice of the 'Dodo'—a mythical spirit well known in Haussaland—rebuking them for their misdeeds. The women all promised atonement.

"The news of the Agabi 'Dodo' soon spread and people came in from the neighbouring villages, curious to hear all about it. Men were let into the secret, but had to swear under penalty of death never to tell their women or children the real origin of this new-found power over them.

575 [344] "The 'Dodo' soon became universal in every village, and each had its own particular 'kurmi,' where 'Dodo' gatherings took place. This tended to still further impress and mystify the women. Only married men were eligible for election, and not until they had been married for two or three years.

"As a rule, initiation into the 'Dodo' society was reserved until such time as there were some ten or twenty young married men ready to be elected. Their wives were informed of the impending ceremony, and on the appointed day had to cook goats or chickens provided by the candidates. The cooked

3: Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoro



When they are about ten years old boys are initiated in these mysteries. They are first shaved, greased and beaten, and are then taken to the sacred grove, but they may not yet drink with the men. They leave the grove and dance all night, and dancing and drinking goes on for another seven days, when they return to their houses, but they may not speak to a woman till another seven days have elapsed. 852

They do not marry until they are sixteen or eighteen years of age, their brides being three or four years younger. The procedure is for the suitor to give the girl's father from four to ten thousand cowries when he proposes. If he is accepted he adds one hoe, one goat, one dog and the flesh of another goat to the gift—an average example which varies according to the wealth of the contracting parties. Beer is prepared by his people, and taken on the wedding day to the bride's house, where drinking goes on for from one to ten days. On the first day the mother takes her daughter to the young man's house for a brief visit, and receives a complimentary present of 2,000 cowries or a hoe—later he comes to her house—and on the second day he takes his wife to his own house where she remains. There is intermarriage between certain tribes, *i.e.*, the Attakka, Moroa, Kaje and Katab, but a Kagoro man will prefer a maiden of his own or of the Attakka tribe, because the others refuse to clear grass for the farms. A virgin may only marry during the wet season, after the seed has been sown. At the end of the millet farming she puts on her married woman's costume and her husband celebrates the occasion by killing a dog and eating its head, liver, entrails and legs, while he gives the neck to those that helped him in courtship, and the remainder to his father-in-law. The blood of slaughtered beasts is always eaten, cooked with fat. If the wife is considered satisfactory her husband gives her mother another present. A girl has the right of refusal and can obtain a divorce, subject to her father's consent, for he retains the legal power to persuade her to go back to her husband, to leave him, or to marry her to someone else. He also has the right of possession over her children, unless her husband redeems them by payment of three goats each. This practice has been put down by the British Government. 582 585 [591] [258] [586]

Children are suckled for two or three years. Boys are named by their father and are circumcised, a very old custom. If a child proves unsound before it is about four years old, or sometimes later, it is thought to be a snake and may be thrown into water. Twins are considered very lucky. 862 304 553 845 847

A man's first wife has authority over subsequent wives and may even beat them, a right so fully recognised that, if these latter forget themselves so far as to retaliate, their parents give her beer. The women all eat together, helping themselves with their right hands, for men alone are allowed the use of spoons. 595 [264]

manuring. Emigration has already started to take place along the southern border of the district into the Keffi Division and along the south-eastern border into Jema'a where the emigrants are loaned land and accepted as welcome additions to the tax lists. It would not appear that any payments in cash or kind have been *so far* demanded from them. What will develop in future is anybody's guess. This question will be returned to at a later stage of the report. 423 [167]

48. The following transactions affecting land are permitted by local custom:— Alienation of lands. 425

Sale—(*saye*) in special circumstances
Loan—(*aro*)
Pledge—(*jingina*)

Gift or exchange do not appear to take place. Such transactions would be regarded locally as loans. Share cropping is unknown. So also is renting or leasing. Such transactions would not be acknowledged as being in conformance with tribal custom. Their introduction would be strongly opposed by responsible elements.

49. In pre-British times the outright sale of land was permitted, but *only in one particular circumstance*. An essential preliminary to marriage was a gift of a goat by the suitor to the girl's relatives. It was an infallible rule—no goat, no girl. Consequently if a man had no goat he was allowed, after consultation with and with the consent of his own relatives, to sell a field to get himself a goat. His own relatives would, of course, probably give him a goat if he had not one himself; but in the last resort and if he could obtain the goat by no other means, then he was allowed to sell a field to get the goat. The sale would be outright and neither he, his descendants nor his relatives nor their descendants could subsequently sustain a claim to the land. Any such sale would have to be reported to the head of the community and could not take place without his knowledge. It would have to be with the consent of his relatives and, above all, could take place in no other circumstance than that of obtaining the bride price—a goat for the prospective wife. Sale. 425 585

50. When the British came, however, (so local report has it) they prohibited the sale of farms—even in these special circumstances. Sales do not now take place. Indeed, according to the Elders, even if allowed by the British it is doubtful whether local opinion would agree to the revival of the custom. After all, in those days lands were more than ample. Nowadays it is very different. And anyway nowadays if a man was hard up and wanted money either for a wife, tax or any other reason all he had to do was to become a labourer for a while and he could get the money. There 425 177